and other tourist spots in the Garhwal region is very hazardous;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the region suffers from lackness of good roads, medical facilities and hotels, tourist complexes and dharamshalas;

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to develop the region; and

(e) if so, the measures being taken by the Government to develop the region?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) to (e). Creation of tourist facilities is primarily the responsibility of the State Goverments. However, the Deptt. of Tourism extends financial assistance to State/Union Territory Governments for tourism projects based on their merits, *inter-se* priority and availability of funds.

The Department of Tourism has provided financial assistance for the following projects in Garhwal Hills to Government of Uttar Pradesh:-

(1) Mini buses for Corbett and Chilla.

(2) Fibre glass huts for Garhwal Hills.

(3) Forest Lodge at Dhangari.

(4) Frekking quipment for Garhwal Region.

(5) Wayside facilities at Dholadevi.

(6) Construction of Motel at Dholadevi.

(7) Water Sports equipment for Garhwal.

(8) Tented accommodation at Nandprayag.

(9) Trivenighat at Rishikesh.

[Translation]

MARR Telephone Syetem

3084. PROF. OMPAL SINGH 'NIDAR': Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the time by which MARR telephone system is likely to start functioning in Uttar Pradesh, district-wise;

(b) The number of telephones, out of order in the village in Agra Division as on November 15, 1996 and the percentage thereof in comparison to the total number of telephones in the villages in Agra Division; and

(c) The steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to bring the telephone facilities provided to the rural subscribers at par with those provided to urban populace?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) MARR Telephone system are functioning in all the districts of Uttar Pradesh. 100% coverage of all the villages with telephone facility is likely to complete by the end of IXth Five Year Plan.

(b) Out of a total 802 number of village public telephones, 158 number of village public telephones are faulty in Agra Division which is 20% of total Village Public Telephones.

(c) Instructions/Guidelines have been issued for testing of MARR systems. Efforts have been increased to improve the porformance and reduce the faults. All the Telecom Circles are trying to enter into Annual Maintenance contract for the repair of faulty telephones apart from daily testing of Village Public Telephones.

Bilaspur-Jabalpur Railway Line

3085. SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been a continuous demand for laying of a railway line from Bilaspur to Jabalpur *Via* Mungeli, Bhugelan to Mandla in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, whether the Government had sanctioned funds to conduct a survey in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any steps have been taken in this regard; and

(e) the time by which the work is likely to be started and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) There have been some representation in this regard.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d). Do not arise.

(e) The work is not planned at present.

[English]

AIR Studio, Kargil

3086. SHRI P. NAMGYAL : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the construction of AIR studios and buildings at Kargil, Jammu and Kashmir have since been completed;

(b) if not, the reasons for delay; and

(c) the time by which these are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) These are technically ready for commissioning and will be commissioned in the ensuing summer season subject to availability of staff for operation and maintenance.